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INFO RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD PRIORITY 0258
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2011
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 003075

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/05/2017

TAGS: PREL PTER JA I2
SUBJECT: IRANIAN VICE FOREIGN MINISTER SAFAR'S VISIT TO
TOKYO

Classified By: Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer. Reasons: 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Summary. Maintaining a positive relationship with Iran would be difficult unless Iran heeds the international community's concern about its uranium enrichment program, Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka told Iranian Vice Foreign Minister Mahdi Safari in Tokyo on June 28. Safari claimed that Iran has the right to pursue a uranium enrichment program for peaceful purposes, categorically denied claims that Iran has cooperated with the Taliban, but was "very positive" about the talks held between the U.S. and Iran in Baghdad on May 28. Foreign Minister Aso offered no comment when Safari conveyed an invitation from Iranian Foreign Minister Mottaki for Aso to visit Iran, MOFA noted.

¶2. (C) On July 3, MOFA Second Middle East Division Iran Desk Director Takashi Kamada gave Embassy Tokyo a read-out of Iranian Vice Foreign Minister of Asian, Oceania and Commonwealth Affairs Mahdi Safari's June 28-29 visit to Tokyo. Safari participated in the 16th Round of Japan-Iran Vice Ministerial Consultation with VFM Yabunaka, paid a 30-minute courtesy call on FM Aso, and attended a meeting of the Japan-Iran Parliamentary Friendship League.

FM Aso Meeting

¶3. (C) FM Aso offered no comment when Safari conveyed an invitation from Iranian FM Mottaki for Aso to visit Iran, according to Kamada. Safari handed Aso a letter that attributed the "crisis" and "existing problems in Iraq" to the "failure of the policies of the occupying foreign forces." In the letter (e-mailed to EAP/J), Tehran solicited suggestions from Japan on how to establish stability and security in Iraq, and asked that the two countries exchange further views on the subject.

Vice-Ministerial Consultations

¶4. (C) Safari told Yabunaka that Iran wanted to expand its relationship with Japan by developing new projects and creating additional Japanese investment in Iran. Yabunaka responded that although Japan wants to maintain a positive relationship with Iran, it would be difficult to do so unless Iran heeds the international community's concern about its uranium enrichment program. In the current climate, Yabunaka said that Tokyo would find it difficult to encourage the Japanese private sector to invest in Iran.

¶5. (C) Yabunaka urged Tehran to comply with all relevant UN Security Council resolutions regarding Iran, Kamada noted. Yabunaka suggested that a meeting scheduled to take place in three weeks between European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana and Iranian Supreme National Security Council

Secretary Mohammad-Javad Larijani would provide a good

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opportunity for Iran to send a positive signal to the international community. Safari replied that Iran had the right to pursue a uranium enrichment program for peaceful purposes.

Iraq

¶6. (C) According to Kamada, Safari was "very positive" about the talks held between the U.S. and Iran in Baghdad on May 28. Safari told Yabunaka that Iran had agreed to participate at the urging of Iraqi PM Maliki and because the U.S. had made a formal request. Safari stated that Iran supported the Maliki government and that Iran had urged all parties to cooperate with Iraqi government officials.

Afghanistan

¶7. (C) Safari categorically denied claims that Iran has cooperated with the Taliban, Kamada said. Asked by Yabunaka if Iran had delivered weapons to the Taliban, Safari responded that anybody could buy anything they wanted in Peshawar. Declaring that "we are not children," Safari told Yabunaka that Iran could easily have hidden any surreptitious plans to support the Taliban by removing product numbers showing Iranian origin on weapons turning up in Taliban hands. Safari claimed that Iran had no alternative but to support the Karzai government. He cited Tehran's acceptance of more than 3.5 million refugees from Afghanistan, 1.5 million of whom came in the past two years, as proof of Iran's support for Kabul. (C) Summary. Maintaining a positive relationship with Iran would be difficult unless Iran heeds the international community's concern about its

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SCHIEFFER